

NOTE

This book, representing the writer's first effort at a long story, has something of a story of its own. First planned in 1900 or 1901, it was begun in 1905, and finished at length, in a version, three years later. Through the two years succeeding it underwent various adventures, including, if memory serves, two complete overhauls. Having thus reached by stages something like its present form, it was, in August, 1910, favorably reported on by the publishers; but yet another rewriting preceded its final acceptance, a few weeks later. Meanwhile, I had turned to fresh work; and, as it chanced, "Queed" was both begun and finished in the interval while "Captivating Mary Carstairs" was taking her last journeys abroad. Turned away by two publishers, the newer manuscript shortly found welcome from a third. So it befell that I, as yet more experienced in rejections, suddenly found myself with two books, of widely different sorts and intentions, scheduled for publication by different publishers, almost simultaneously. As this seemed to be more books than society required from an unknown writer, it was decided to put out the present story — which is a "story," as I conceive the terms, and not a novel — over a pen name.

At that time, be it said, with an optimism that now has its humorous side, I viewed myself prospectively as a ready and fertile writer, producing a steady flow of books of very various sorts. Hence it occurred to me that a pseudonym might have a permanent serviceability. So far from these anticipations proving justified, I am now moved to abandon the pseudonym in the only instance I have had occasion to use it. Writers have sometimes been charged with seeking to capitalize their own good fortune. My motive, in authorizing the republication of this story over my name, is not that. The fact is only that experience has taught me not to like pseudonymity: my feeling being that those who take an interest in my work are entitled, if they so desire, to see it as a whole.

H. S. H.

Charleston, West Virginia,
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